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Bureau of Land Management, Western Oregon Plan Revisions Office
333 SW 1st. Avenue, Portland, OR 97208

Re: BLM Western Oregon Plan Revisions

Dear BLM,

I am very concerned with the direction the Bush Administration is headed with the management of nearly 2.6 million acres of federal forests under the Western Oregon Plan Revisions. The changes the Bureau of Land Management is contemplating will unravel the protections of the landmark Northwest Forest Plan, and will lead to water pollution, degraded habitat, and increased conflict and controversy.

The Bush Administration would place half of the public land that the BLM manages – and most of our best old-growth BLM forests – in "Timber Management Areas" to be clearcut every 80 years. The Bush Administration's preferred alternative proposes to clearcut 110,000 acres of Oregon's old-growth (120+ years) and build 1,000 mile of new logging roads every decade while creating over 100,000 miles of new Off Highway Vehicle Emphasis Areas – all at the expense of roadless areas, threatened species, water quality and non-motorized recreation. Shockingly, the proposal ignores the role that these forests play in regulating the climate.

Most Americans want federal land managers to embrace thinning second growth forests, safeguard communities from wildfire and protect what remains of our nation's ancient forests. Indeed, many Oregon forest managers are already moving beyond the conflicts of the past. By focusing on previously logged public forestlands - many of which are now overgrown and in need of thinning - they are providing wood to local mills while actually improving conditions for fish and wildlife and keeping saws out of precious old-growth forests.

In contrast, the WOPR proposes to inflame the controversy by increasing old-growth clearcutting for a short-term economic fix. The WOPR puts water quality at risk and would destroy some of Oregon's most special places. We should protect our remaining mature and old-growth forests on public land, not clearcut these natural treasures.

It is disappointing that at a time when public consensus for old-growth protection and second-growth thinning has never been stronger, the BLM is proposing to clearcut forests older than our nation and turn complex ecosystems into tree plantations most susceptible to severe wildfire.

Please protect remaining old-growth forests, focus active management of BLM lands in already logged-over areas, and create job opportunities in restoration thinning projects that benefit watersheds and generate wood products without multiplying past mistakes.

Sincerely,

David A. Gasser

CC: Oregon Congressional delegation